

POLITICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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substantial share of power, and press forward towards a minimum standard of life. It is this rigidity of mind, this lack of imagination, this narrowness of sympathy, which excludes him from the front rank of statesmen and thinkers.

Despite its ample dimensions, Guizot's apologia is almost purely political. Except in the first volume it tells us little about his family and his friends. There is only one passing reference to Princess Lieven. "There is no humour, no irony," writes Mr. Woodward. "A cold magnificence, a splendid

disdain set a barrier between Guizot and the men whom he governed. They and their posterity have a right to know his conduct of the great business of state, the immediate or distant ends he tried to serve; all else is his own.* Seven of the eight volumes are devoted to the reign of Louis Philippe, whom he served as Minister of Education, where he did his best work, Foreign Minister and Premier. For the years 1840-8 they are almost a history of France, though rather of foreign than internal affairs. The controversial episode of the Spanish

marriages is described at immense length without entirely clearing his character. The curious reader will find the whole documented story of that rather unsavoury transaction told for the first time in an admirable volume by Dr. Jones Parry.

He was not alone to blame for the destruction of the Anglo-French Entente, for Palmerston had a finger in the pie and Louis Philippe pushed his dynastic interests; yet the story diminishes the moral stature of a man who professed to steer his course by the stars. The scholar-statesman remains an impressive and on the whole an attractive figure, but his testimony, like that of other members of the craft, needs to be scrutinised with a critical eye. His strength and weakness are described with deep insight in the first volume of Faguet's incomparable *Politiques et moralists* du*

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slick and in Woodward's *Three Studies in European Conservatism*.

The first British Prime "Minister since Clarendon to compose an apologia was Lord John Russell, whose ^{^collections} *and Suggestions*, published in 1875, cover the years from his election to Parliament in 1813 till 1873. Large parts of it had already appeared in the form of Introductions* to the volumes of his *Speeches and Despatches*. The biographer of Fox thought as a Whig and wrote as a Whig; but except for sharp attacks on "those bandits," the "Adullamites," who wrecked the Reform Bill of 1867, and on Gladstone's handling of the Alabama case, there is none of the bitterness bred by disappointments and frustration which disfigures so many political autobiographies.